

CITY OF LAWTON

COUNCIL POLICY 11-3 CITIZENS' POLICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: Citizens' Police Advisory Committee

PURPOSE: The Lawton Police Department desires to maintain a partnership with the community to reduce crime and to enhance the quality of life. The Citizens' Police Advisory Committee ("CPAC") is established to pursue these goals through positive and open communication and the development of public trust.

BACKGROUND: The role of the CPAC will be to enhance and encourage the flow of communication by being a resource for Citizens and the Police Department in building better communication with the community it serves and protects. The CPAC is hereby created to facilitate interaction between the Police Department and a committee of citizens, representative of the various ethnic and cultural groups within our community.

The CPAC is committed to partnering with the Lawton Police Department to provide leadership, vision and communication resources to build stronger relations between the police and members of the community. The mission of the CPAC is to develop and maintain a partnership between the community and the Police Department. This is an effort to reduce crime and enhance the quality of life for all citizens through positive and open communication. The CPAC is created to facilitate interaction between the Police Department and a committee of citizens which is a diverse, yet representative entity, derived from a wide section of the community. The CPAC will work with the Police Department to establish the highest standards for police accountability and increase the public's trust and participation in citizen/public servant relationships.

1.0 CPAC DUTIES

The duties of the CPC shall be as set forth herein, specifically:

- Maintain a consistent partnership between the community and law enforcement - serve as an advocate for programs, ideas and methods to improve relationships.
- Serve to help reduce crime and enhance the quality of life for all citizens.
- Establish goals that can be accomplished through positive and open communication.
- Help community groups share responsibility for police accountability and the commitment to serve.
- Establish a process to increase community dialogue at meetings and other events with the goal of enhancing public trust and public participation in citizen/public servant relationships.
- Improve interaction between police and citizens through education and training.
- Listen to citizen's concerns and attitudes toward policing and publish the results to city leadership. (Open Community Forums, for example).
- Provide comments, suggestions and recommendations to the Chief of Police on department policy, procedure and rules. Note: all authority to establish and determine department policy, procedure and rules shall remain with the City.

- Convene or attend periodic public forums to establish an exchange of dialogue with the community.
- Members of the community will be encouraged to express concerns regarding the actions of the police department and may request information on CPAC activities.
- Assist members of the police department in achieving a greater understanding of the nature and causes of community problems, with an emphasis on supporting and improving relations between the police department and the citizens of Lawton.
- Recommend methods to encourage and develop an active citizen-police crime prevention partnership.
- Work to strengthen and ensure, throughout the community, the application of equal protection under the law to all.
- Promote public awareness of present-day policing issues to the police department.

Upon review of the above matters, the CPAC may periodically address its recommendations and concerns, if any, to the Chief of Police in writing as it deems appropriate. The Chief of Police will consider the CPAC's recommendations or concerns. Should any issue remain unresolved after being submitted to the Chief of Police, the CPAC may refer the matter to the Lawton City Manager for review. The City shall retain final decision-making authority on all matters.

2.0 CPAC MEMBER APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The CPAC shall consist of seven voting members and three non-voting members.

Voting Members – Selection Process.

In order to facilitate the nomination of individuals to become voting members of the CPAC, a nominating committee will be formed from representatives of Lawton organizations, including: Cameron University, Lawton Public Schools, Great Plains Technology Center, Lawton-Fort Sill Chamber of Commerce, Comanche County Memorial Hospital, Southwestern Hospital, Lawton Branch NAACP, and the Lawton-Fort Sill Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance. The nominating committee will be charged with developing an application and an application process for the submission of nominees to the City Council for consideration for confirmation to the CPAC. Nominations should be non-political and shall not have a criminal felony record or be involved in a legal action against the City at the time of their nomination. Additionally, the following individuals shall also not be eligible for nomination to serve as a voting member: (1) employees of the City of Lawton, (2) current active and/or reserve law enforcement officers of any law enforcement agency, and (3) former law enforcement officers, unless three years removed from employment as a law enforcement officer.

When a vacancy occurs with a voting position on the CPAC, the nominating committee shall submit at least one name of a qualified nominee to the City Council for consideration. The Council, however, will not be bound by any nomination it receives from the nominating committee. In the event the City Council fails to confirm the nominee submitted for consideration, the nominating committee will submit a different nominee to the City Council for consideration.

Once confirmed by City Council, a voting member will serve a three-year term. The initial term of some of the group of confirmed members will be less than three years to allow for a “staggered” membership wherein all members of the CPAC will not leave the CPAC at the same time: i.e. the initial term for the initial first three confirmed members shall be one year; the initial term of the initial fourth and fifth confirmed members shall be two years; and the initial term of the initial sixth and seventh confirmed members shall be three years.

Upon expiration of a voting member’s term of service, or should a vacancy otherwise occur, the City Council shall have the responsibility to solicit nominations and appoint a new voting-member/s to the CPAC. In such a situation the nominating committee shall provide the City Council the names of nominees for consideration.

Non-Voting Members.

Non-voting members will serve in an advisory and support capacity. The term of non-voting members shall be three-years from the date of appointment.

The Chief of Police shall nominate one non-voting member who will upon confirmation by the City Council serve as the police department's representative to the CPAC. The police department’s representative will be a sworn officer currently serving on the Lawton Police Department.

The City Council will select a current member of the City Council to serve as a non-voting member of the CPAC. This individual shall be the City Council’s representative to the CPAC.

Fort Sill shall have the option at its discretion to nominate an active duty and/or retired individual who will, upon confirmation by the City Council, serve as a non-voting member of the CPAC. The Ft. Sill nominee may be someone who resides either on Post or within the City of Lawton. This individual shall be Ft. Sill’s representative to the CPAC.

Upon expiration of a non-voting member’s term of service, or should a vacancy otherwise occur, the City Council shall have the responsibility to solicit nominations and appoint a new non-voting member/s to the CPAC. The nominating committee shall not be involved in the nomination of non-voting members.

3.3 Removal of CPAC Member

All members of the CPAC are expected to exhibit the highest ethical and professional standards. Upon recommendation of the CPAC for cause, a CPAC member may be removed upon a majority vote of the City Council.

In the event a CPAC member is unavailable to attend a regularly scheduled CPAC meeting, he/she should contact the CPAC Chairperson or the police department's representative and notify them of such. Any appointed member of the CPAC who has three (3) unexcused absences from consecutive regular meetings shall automatically cease to be a member of the CPAC, and their seat on the CPAC shall therefore immediately be declared vacant. Any such vacancy shall be filled through the applicable process described in Section 2.0 herein. For purposes of this paragraph "unexcused absence" shall mean an absence from a meeting that was not excused by the chairperson of the CPAC in advance of the beginning of the meeting; or in the event of an absence of the chairperson, excused by the Vice-Chair in advance of the beginning of the meeting.

Any member of the CPAC who is either convicted of a felony during their term or is otherwise discovered to have a felony on their record shall automatically cease to be a member of the CPAC, and their seat on the CPAC shall therefore immediately be declared vacant. Any such vacancy shall be filled through the applicable process described in Section 2.0 herein.

4.0 ORGANIZATION

Voting members shall select a Chairperson and any other officers they deem necessary by a majority vote. The voting members may adopt rules and procedures relating to the operation of the CPAC. The CPAC shall determine the date, time, and place for each meeting. The CPAC will not adopt a rule that is in conflict with any provision of this policy, city code, state or federal law. Meetings of the CPAC will be preceded by public notice and conducted in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

4.1 Members, Duties and Meetings

Officers - The officers shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. The election of officers shall be accomplished through the majority vote of the CPAC's voting members during the first meeting of the calendar year. The Chair shall not vote, except in the case of a tie. The term for each office shall be one year, and a member may be re-elected as an officer without term limits.

An officer may resign from the office at any time by giving written notice to another officer. Officers may be recalled and removed from office for cause. Removal for cause may be based on, but not limited to, serious criminal convictions or failure to uphold the responsibilities of the office. In the event of a vacancy of office, all other officers shall advance to the next highest office and remain in that office through the following calendar year. Any remaining vacancy shall be filled by a special election of the voting members.

Chair - The Chair shall preside over and direct the meetings and activities of the CPAC, and, along with the Police Liaison Officer, will serve as the media contact of the CPAC.

Vice Chair - The Vice Chair shall act in lieu of the Chair in the event the Chair is absent or unable to perform, and other such duties required by the CPAC.

Secretary - The Secretary shall keep minutes of the meetings and proceedings of the CPAC and serve notice of meetings. The Secretary will keep accurate current and historical records and perform such duties as required by the CPAC.

Regular Meetings - Regular meetings of the CPAC shall be held on a monthly or other schedule as set forth by the CPAC members.

Meeting Rules - Roberts Rules of Order shall govern conduct of the meetings when not in conflict with other CPAC rules. (www.robertsrules.org)

Special Meetings - The Chair may call for special meetings apart from those regularly scheduled as needed for special concerns or considerations. All meetings shall be preceded by appropriate public notice and conducted in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

Quorum - Two-thirds of the voting members shall constitute a quorum for recommendations and other actions of the CPAC. Every act or decision made by a majority of CPAC members shall be considered as an act of the CPAC.

Correspondence - Correspondence by the CPAC or any of its members to any individual, agency, or organization is not authorized without prior review and approval of the Chair.

Employees of the City of Lawton may not be voting members of the CPAC.

Voting members serve in a voluntary capacity and shall receive no monetary compensation or any other financial or employee benefit from the City. The City of Lawton will provide limited office supplies and meeting space necessary for the operation of the CPAC.

4.2 Training

Each voting member shall attend an orientation presented by the police department to familiarize the CPAC with the operation of City government, the police department and the rules and operating procedures of the CPAC.

Each voting member will be encouraged to complete the Citizens Police Academy and participate in at least one ride-along with a Lawton Police Officer.

Members shall have access to the Lawton Police Department Policies and Procedures and the City of Lawton Codes.

CPAC voting members will also attend four hours of diversity training annually.

5.0 CPAC RULES

5.1 Confidentiality

The chairperson shall serve as the spokesperson for the CPAC.

During the course of carrying out their duties, members of the CPAC may from time to time receive information of a sensitive and/or confidential nature. It shall be the strict duty and responsibility of each member to maintain the confidentiality of such information. Neither the CPAC, nor any individual member, shall disseminate confidential information. CPAC members shall be required to sign confidentiality statements and may face removal from the CPAC upon violation of the confidentiality agreement.

5.2 Limitation of Powers

The CPAC or any individual member shall not:

- Incur City expense or obligate the City in any manner.
- Release any written or oral report of any CPAC activity to any individual or body other than to the Chief of Police or the City Manager.
- Conduct any activity, which might constitute or be construed as the establishment of City or police department policy.
- Receive any confidential information related to matters involving pending, current or forthcoming civil or criminal litigations.
- Participate in or have access to any confidential or protected files or documents regarding disciplinary actions.
- Have access to files or documents that are excluded, exempt, or not otherwise required to be released pursuant to Oklahoma Open Records laws.

As to matters pertaining to the City of Lawton (including but not limited to the Lawton Police Department), the CPAC shall have recommending authority only. The CPAC shall not have any decision-making authority as to City of Lawton matters, nor shall it have the authority to spend public funds.

Matters pertaining to the discipline of police department employees will be the sole responsibility of the Chief of Police and/or City Manager and not the CPAC. The activities of the CPAC shall, at all times, be conducted in accordance with all federal, state and local laws.

5.3 Additional Rules


The CPAC shall have the authority to adopt additional rules concerning its operation. However, the CPAC will not adopt a rule that is in conflict with any provision of this policy. Should a conflict between a CPAC rule and this policy arise, the provisions of this policy shall control.

6.0 AMENDMENTS and/or REPEAL OF POLICY. The City reserves the right to amend and/or repeal this policy, as well as City Code Section 2-3-14-287, at any time as the city council, in its sole discretion, deems appropriate.

REFERENCE: None

EFFECTIVE DATE:

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Police Department



Mayor Stanley Booker

12/08/20

Date

APPROVED as to form and legality this 10th day of December, 2020.



TIM WILSON, INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY